

Claims

1. A portable electronic communication apparatus including a user-interface having two active modes of operation, the apparatus including: first and second members each having a first surface and an opposite second surface, the user interface being provided at the first surface of the first member; and a connecting mechanism for movably connecting the first and second members such that, when the first and second members are positioned apart from each other in an open position, the apparatus is in a first active mode of operation of the user-interface, and , when the first and second members are positioned together in a first closed position such that the second surface of the first member is closed toward one surface of the other member such that the user interface is accessible, the apparatus is in a second active mode of operation of the user interface.

2. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 1 wherein, in a third mode of operation of the user-interface, the first and second surfaces are positioned together in a second closed position such that the first surface of the first member is closed toward one surface of the other member such that the user interface is inaccessible.

3. A portable electronic communication device according to claim 1 wherein, in the third mode of operation, the user-interface is inactive.

4. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 2 wherein the user-interface is a display.

5. A portable electronic communication device according to claim 1 wherein the apparatus comprises one and only one display.

6. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 2 further comprising a second user interface at the first surface of the second member.

7. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 6 wherein the second user-interface is a keypad.

8. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 2 wherein the position of the first and second members relative to each other determines a mode of operation of the apparatus.

9. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the first mode or operation is a fully operational mode of operation.

10. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the second mode of operation is a standby mode of operation.

11. A portable electronic communication according to claim 17 wherein the display is active in both the first and second modes of operation.

12. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 14 wherein the apparatus is switched off in the second closed position.

13. A portable electronic communication device according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus is a mobile telephone.

14. A portable electronic communication device according to claim 1 wherein the apparatus is a personal digital assistant.

15. A portable electronic communication apparatus including first and second members each having a first surface and an opposite second surface, a first user interface being provided at the first surface of the first member; and a connecting mechanism for movably connecting the first and second members such that in a first closed position the first surface of the first member is closed toward a surface of the second member, and in a closed position the second surface of the first member is closed toward a surface of the second member such that the first user interface is accessible in the first closed position.

16. A portable electronic communication apparatus according to claim 15 further comprising a second user interface provided at the first surface of the second member, wherein, in the first closed position, the second surfaces of the members are closed toward each other such that the second user interface is accessible in the first closed position.

17. A portable communication device comprising a first housing and a second housing, each housing comprising a first surface and a second, opposing surface, said first housing including a first user interface disposed in the first surface thereof, said device further comprising a pivot mechanism that permits the first and second housings to be pivoted between a first open position in which the first and second housings are arranged generally end-to-end with each other and a first closed position in which the second surfaces of the first and second housings, respectively, face each other such that, in the first closed position, the first user interface is accessible.

18. A portable communication device according to claim 17 wherein the device is in a first operational mode when in the first open position and in a second operational mode when in the first closed position.

19. A portable communication device according to claim 18 further comprising means for automatically detecting when the device is in the first open position or the first closed position and means for automatically entering the corresponding mode responsive to the means for detecting.

20. A portable communication device according to claim 19 further comprising means for enabling a user of the device to select at least one of the first and second operational modes.

21. A portable communication device according to claim 18 wherein the first user interface is a display and is active in the first and second operational modes.

22. A portable communication device according to claim 17 further comprising a second user interface disposed in the first surface of the second housing such that, in the first closed position, the second user interface is accessible.

23. A portable communication device according to claim 22 wherein the second user interface is a keypad and is active in the first open position and inactive in the first closed position.

24. A portable communication device according to claim 17 wherein the pivot mechanism further permits the first and second housings to be pivoted to a second closed position in which the first surfaces of the first and second housings, respectively, face each other such that, in the second closed position, the first user interface is inaccessible.

25. A portable communication device according to claim 24 wherein the device is in a first operational mode when in the first open position, in a second operational mode when in the first closed position, and in a third operational mode when in the second closed position.

26. A portable communication device according to claim 25 further comprising means for automatically detecting when the device is in the first open position, the first closed position, or the second closed position and means for automatically entering the corresponding mode responsive to the means for detecting.

27. A portable communication device according to claim 26 further comprising means for enabling a user of the device to select at least the second and third operational modes.

28. A portable communication device according to claim 25 wherein the first user interface is a display and is active in the first and second operational modes and inactive in the third operational mode.

29. A portable communication device according to claim 24 further comprising a second user interface disposed in the first surface of the second housing such that, in the first closed position, the second user interface is

accessible, and, in the second closed position, the second user interface is inaccessible.

30. A portable communication device according to claim 29 wherein the device is in a first operational mode when in the first open position, in a second operational mode when in the first closed position, and in a third operational mode when in the second closed position.

31. A portable communication device according to claim 30 further comprising means for automatically detecting when the device is in the first open position or the first closed position and means for automatically entering the corresponding mode responsive to the means for detecting.

32. A portable communication device according to claim 31 further comprising means for enabling a user of the device to select at least the second and third operational modes.

33. A portable communication device according to claim 30 wherein the first user interface is a display and is active in the first and second operational modes.

34. A portable communication device according to claim 30 wherein the second user interface is a keypad and is active in the first operational mode and inactive in the second operational mode.

35. A portable communication device according to claim 34 wherein the first and second user interfaces are inactive in the third operational mode.